

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1313

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 3679

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,MSPGOVN :

SUBJECT: LIST OF COSTA RICAN LAWYERS FOR
JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

REF: STATE 186000

STATE 176175

STATE 203920

1. AS REQUESTED REFTELS, EMBASSY SUBMITS FOLLOWING LIST OF COSTA RICAN LAWYERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO ADVISE U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE ON COSTA RICAN CORPORATE TAX LAW AND REGULATIONS. CRITERIA EMBASSY HAS USED TO COMPILE THESE NAMES ARE SPECIALIZATION IN COSTA RICAN CORPORATE AND TAX LAW AND REGULATIONS, HONESTY, PROBITY, DISCRETION AND TRUSTWORTHINESS, KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH, AND FAMILIARIZATION WITH (INCLUDING POSSIBLE EXPERIENCE IN) LEGAL SYSTEM OF U.S. IT IS A PRIORITY LISTING. NATURALLY, NONE OF THE INDIVIDUALS IS AWARE THAT SUCH A LIST IS BEING COMPILED OR OF HIS INCLUSION THEREIN.

2. EDUARDO ORTIZ ORTIZ: LIC. ORTIZ, ABOUT 40, IS KNOWN AS AN OUTSTANDINGLY ABLE AND HARD WORKING ATTORNEY. IN ADDITION TO HIS THRIVING PRACTICE, HE IS DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF LAW, AND ALSO TEACHES ADMINISTRATIVE LAW. LIC. ORTIZ' STRONG PERSONALITY AND NO-NONSENSE APPROACH TO HIS PROFESSION, UNIVERSITY PROBLEMS, AND CLIENTS, GIVES
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HIM THE REPUTATION OF BEING, AT TIMES, BLUNT OR IRASCIBLE.

HE IS CONSIDERED AN AUTHORITY ON COSTA RICAN ADMINISTRATIVE, PUBLIC, AND CONSTITUTIONAL LAW. FLUENT IN ENGLISH, ORTIZ HAS A MASTER'S DEGREE IN COMPARATIVE LAW FROM NYU (1957). IF HE WOULD TAKE THE CASE, JUSTICE WOULD HAVE ONE OF COSTA RICA'S BEST. SEE ALSO EMBASSY'S LAWYER LIST.

2. HARRY ZURCHER: IN HIS MID-60S, ZURCHER IS A WELL ESTABLISHED AND HIGHLY RESPECTED SPECIALIST IN COMMERCIAL LAW, WHO HAS REPRESENTED A NUMBER OF U.S. FIRMS IN COSTA RICA, HE IS FLUENT IN ENGLISH. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT IN MARCH 1973 ZURCHER WAS ENGAGED BY SEC TO SERVE A SUMMONS AND COMPLAINT ON ULRICH STRICKLER. THERE WAS SOME CONFUSION AND ZURCHER FAILED TO SERVE ONE DOCUMENT, WHICH EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS WAS NOT A CRITICAL MATTER. EMBASSY IS IMPRESSED WITH ZURCHER'S HIGH REPUTATION IN LOCAL LEGAL CIRCLES. SE ALSO EMBASSY'S LAWYER LIST.

3. ALVARO PINTO LOPEZ: ABOUT 49, PINTO IS ALSO AN NYU COMPARATIVE LAW GRADUATE. HIS ENGLISH IS ADEQUATE. IN ADDITION TO A BUSY LAW PRACTICE AND MANAGING HIS OWN BUSINESS AFFAIRS (HE IS A LAND OWNER), PINTO IS A SUPPLEMENTARY MEMBER OF THE COSTA RICAN SUPREME ELECTION TRIBUNAL, THE BODY THAT ARBITRATES ALL DISPUTES STEMMING FROM ELECTIONS IN THE COUNTRY. DUE TO THE LATTER POSITION, PINTO IS NOT ACTIVE POLITICALLY AND MIGHT NOT WISH TO ACCEPT US CASE.

4. LUIS RAFAEL TINOCO ALVARADO: TINOCO, ABOUT 35, IS A MEMBER OF HIS FATHER'S LAW FIRM. HE IS KNOWN TO BE ONE OF THE BRIGHTER YOUNG CORPORATE LAWYERS IN COSTA RICA. HE SPEAKS ENGLISH.

5. GUIDO LORILLA BENAVIDES: LORILLA, WELL VERSED IN TAX AND ADMINISTRATIVE LAW, HAS THE ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE OF BEING A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF ORTIZ, ALTHOUGH THEY NO LONGER ARE LAW PARTNERS. HE IS HEAD OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT OF SNA, GOVERNMENT WATER AND SEWERAGE AGENCY, AND THEREFORE MIGHT NOT WISH TO TAKE THIS CASE. HE HANDLES ENGLISH ADEQUATELY.

6. COMMENT: IN CULLING THROUGH NAMES TO PRESENT TO CONFIDENTIAL

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JUSTICE, EMBASSY HAD TO DISCARD NUMBER OF COMPETENT LAWYERS (1) WHO ARE REPRESENTING LIQUIDATORS IN VESCO CASE OR (2) WHO MIGHT EVEN IN REMOTE WAY HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH QUESTIONABLE CASES, VESCO RELATED AND OTHERWISE. LAWYERS ON THIS LIST ARE KNOWN THROUGH PERSONAL CONTACT WITH EMBASSY OR FOR THEIR REPUTATIONS IN LEGAL COMMUNITY. BOTH ORTIZ AND LORILLA ALSO KNOWLEDGEABLE RE EXTRADITION

MATTERS; THEIR FIRM HANDLED WELL KNOWN EXTRADITION CASE
OF AN INDIAN NATIOKEL A FEW YEARS AGO.
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